

THE ISNEG LIFE CYCLE

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her consent would be utter recklessness or, rather, out of the question: you would never escape unscathed from the place of your crime. For the rest be careful; even if the girl consents, always remember what pregnancy brings in its wake; so the surest way is to keep oneself free from such entanglements.

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"Girls should never be very familiar with young men. Boys will tempt you with fine words and beautiful promises, they will bring you clothes and trinkets as gifts, but beware. Never give yourself over to any boy at night, never allow him to touch you indecently when he comes to talk to you in the evening. Do not even allow him to finger your breasts: all this is dangerous play. Just think what it would mean to have a child before marriage; would that not be an eternal shame? And just imagine the scolding you would get from your parents, the turmoil in which the whole settlement would be thrown, and the difficulty you would encounter from now on in looking for a husband. You are allowed to marry young, so let everything take its usual course. Boys will always be boys; besides they are men, and so they are allowed a certain freedom; but you are a girl, you are a woman, and in your case nothing is allowed. An Isneg girl should never be a flirt. The boys will try to play with you; it is not for you to allow them to do so. Always show your resentment, when they have touched you the wrong way or been otherwise too familiar with you"

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To touch a girl's breasts is *magkabbdl* in Isneg, and it is said only of men. The existence of a special term like that serves to show that this must be something like a favorite sport among the Isneg. The following anecdote will help to prove the truth of that statement. On a certain occasion an Isneg boy was explaining to me a native term whose meaning was "purpose, intention", and as he could hardly do so without illustrating it by an example, he told me what follows: "Suppose you touch a girl's breasts and she is angry at you, then you say: 'I did not do it intentionally'", and here he used the term in question.

Chastity is certainly very strictly imposed upon unmarried people, or rather upon people who are not yet engaged, but from the Isneg point of view and with reference to young men, it should rather be defined: not to do anything that might render a girl pregnant. Not that the Isneg know any contraceptive measures, but that the pregnancy of a girl is considered as the thing to be avoided, not fornication as such. Both are very nearly related to one another of

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836 course, and the distinction seems rather to be theoretical than practical; nevertheless that is what is going on in the Isneg mind as far
673 as I understand it. To them purpose and intention mean very little,
684 as will be shown again very soon when I shall refer to killing as a
672 crime: what counts is the result. If a boy chanced to sleep with a
girl without rendering her pregnant, the Isneg may perhaps not see
anything very wrong in the whole affair, but woe to him if fate is
against him.

836 Nevertheless with reference to young women, the code is much
stricter, although the boy will suffer a much harder immediate
684 punishment for his delinquency than will the girl. A girl should
never think of doing anything in that line; a boy might perhaps be
inclined to do it, but he should know the consequences, if the result is
what it should not be.

834 I have described in my introduction to this paper how certain
Isneg parents refused to send their girls to school on account of the
626 notoriously immoral conduct of their teacher, and here is what we
read in a little manual of instructions for soldiers of the Philippine
Constabulary: "No Isneg woman should be joked with or touched
by anyone. Christian cargadores or servants should be cautioned
about this, as serious trouble may result".

836 Once I heard a boy of some twelve years old, who was working for
wages here at Kabugaw, improvise a little song, probably in order to
533 render the work less heavy and to relieve his tiredness. The song
was not what you would call a religious one, but it served to show
very nicely the ideas current among these people, and at the same
time it proved that even the Isneg understood the meaning of what
is called an "occasion of sin" (in this case: the sin of impregnating
a girl). I may be permitted to write the song down exactly as I
heard it: "Do not approach my vulva, I do not want you to have
sexual intercourse with me, I am afraid of becoming pregnant: so
say the women".

836 A boy who has made a girl pregnant has to marry her; if he refuses,
the raids just referred to take place without exception, and the family
684 of the boy loses everything. The same happens when a married man
commits adultery with a girl and impregnates her; in his case of
course there is rarely question of marriage, and the raids take place
almost without exception. Formerly the boy must have been for-

[113] * Camp John Hay Guide Book. A Trip to Ifugao and Bontoc. By Captain
Harrington W. Cochran, Coast Artillery Corps, 1923, p. 28.